

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 21, 2020

The Honorable Thomas McCaffery  
Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs  
Defense Health Agency  
7700 Arlington Boulevard  
Suite 5101  
Falls Church, VA 22042-5101

Dear Assistant Secretary McCaffery,

We write to request information regarding the Defense Health Agency's (DHA) monitoring of Tricare beneficiary satisfaction with prescription drug plans.

It has been brought to our attention that Tricare beneficiaries are required to fill certain prescriptions and maintenance medications through Express Scripts mail-in pharmacies with no option to use local pharmacists. These requirements eliminate choice and diminish the control an individual has over his or her health plan, potentially driving down beneficiary satisfaction.

We applaud Tricare's use of retail pharmacies by allowing beneficiaries to obtain vaccinations and other services at their local pharmacy. As you know in addition to dispensing medications and vaccines, local community pharmacists provide many valued and cost-saving services. Examples include: medication adherence services, access to health tests, and management of chronic conditions such as diabetes and heart disease. Local and community pharmacies are considered healthcare providers to our veterans and service members living in rural areas.

In order to better understand Tricare beneficiaries' satisfaction with the process of filling prescriptions via mail-in pharmacies, we respectfully request answers to the following questions.

1. How is DHA monitoring the delivery of medication from mail-in pharmacies to beneficiaries to ensure it arrives in a timely manner?
2. How is DHA monitoring the availability of prescription medications and alerting beneficiaries that their prescription drug is in short supply?
3. One benefit of using local and community pharmacies to fill prescription medications is the support these pharmacies offer by answering questions regarding dosage, side effects, and other concerns of the beneficiary. How is DHA ensuring that beneficiaries receive equivalent support from mail-in pharmacies?
4. Is there a course of action beneficiaries can pursue if they are unsatisfied with the delivery or availability of medication or support from the mail-in pharmacies?

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We look forward to receiving your response and working with you to ensure Tricare beneficiaries are satisfied with their health plans and continue to receive the utmost care.

Sincerely,



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John Boozman  
United States Senator



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Tom Cotton  
United States Senator